

CABINET EXPECTED TO RELAX MORE COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

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Over the weekend, the successfully staged Day Break breakfast fete signaled the return of major private events to the Antigua and Barbuda entertainment calendar after a two year hiatus. [Photo credit: Day Break]

Local News



Significant changes expected to remaining COVID restrictions

Cabinet seems set to announce the removal of further COVID-19 restrictions that were implemented about two years ago to combat the spread of the virus.

Making mask wearing optional, a return to full face-to-face learning in schools, and ending the testing mandate for unvaccinated students and public sector workers are among the announcements that will likely be made following today's weekly Cabinet meeting.

A communication believed to have been sent by Cabinet Secretary Konata Lee, to permanent secretaries and other managers within the public service stated the policy regarding testing has been discontinued, and that [unvaccinated] employees will no longer be required to test every 14 days.

Additionally, proof of vaccination as a requirement to enter some public buildings has also ended.

The electronic correspondence did not address schools, but it is believed the discontinuation of the restrictions will extend to include learning institutions.

Minister of Health and Wellness, Sir Molwyn Joseph, during a press conference yesterday, said there were no decisions to announce. He added, howev-



Minister of Health and Wellness, Sir Molwyn Joseph

er, that by the end of their meeting today, there will be significant changes to the remaining restrictions.

"We are not here to make announcements; Cabinet makes the decisions. We have the objective though of ensuring that whatever is recommended to the Cabinet, is in the context of the science and the data that we have," Minister Joseph said.

The gradual removal of the remaining restrictions is in keeping with government's plan to fully reopen the country to strengthen its economic standing, which was dealt a major blow as a result of the global response to the pandemic.

Recently, the mandate that prevented unvaccinated citizens from returning home was lifted, allowing them to return home under specific conditions.

Making mask wearing optional may be the biggest step the government will take in returning the country to a state of normalcy. If approved, Antigua and Barbuda will be the first English-speaking nation in the Caribbean where mask wearing will no longer be compulsory.

Chief Medical Officer Dr. Rhonda Sealey-Thomas assured that the recommendations for lifting the restrictions will be carried out in accordance with PAHO/WHO criteria.

Addressing the possibility that mask wearing will become optional, she stated that as medical experts, their recommendations are made exclusively from a scientific perspective.

"Currently, the WHO is recommending that the wearing of face masks can

be something that countries can consider lifting, the restriction for the use of face masks outdoors, and that's something that I'm still deliberating on and reading the science on it, and a recommendation will be made," Dr. Sealey-Thomas said.

While the recommendations of health experts are important in the country's management of the COVID-19 pandemic, Health Minister Sir Molwyn explained it is the duty of the Cabinet to make decisions in the interest of the country as a whole, referring to the decision to reopen the country's borders.

"Let me take you back to the 4th of June in 2020, when the recommendation from the technical officers was not to open the country. The Cabinet met, and in balancing everything, public health, the impact of the COVID on the economy, the Cabinet of Antigua and Barbuda made a decision to open up the economy on June 4th, and from all indications, it was the right decision.

"We don't expect technical officers to make the decisions of Cabinet; they make the input and then the Cabinet decides, taking into consideration all the factors before it, which are not necessarily the same factors before the technical officers."

Health Minister: New normal for Antigua and Barbuda

Antigua and Barbuda is now in the control phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, with the endemic stage just one step away.

That was the declaration of Minister of Health and Wellness, Sir Molwyn Joseph, while speaking at a press conference convened yesterday, where he expressed satisfaction at the significant reduction of positive COVID-19 cases nationally.

Two years after the virus was declared a pandemic by the World Health organization, Sir Molwyn Joseph said the country has made remarkable achievements in managing its spread.

He thanked frontline staff and Antiguan and Barbudans who collectively fought the spread of the virus, adding today's success is due in large part to their commitment.

"As a result of that, we are now at a phase where the last EP report indicates that there are only 13 cases over the last seven-day EP period.

"That takes us in an average daily case where we believe the time has come for us to be able to relax many of the measures, not all, many of the measures that have been used effectively and have brought us to where we are today," the health minister pointed out.



It will be a long time before Antigua and Barbuda returns to its pre-pandemic state when shopping scenes like this one captured at the St. John's Fish Market were common. After more than two years, however, steps are being taken by the government to restore a degree of normalcy. [Photo: Flickr]

The first positive case of COVID-19 was confirmed on 11th March, 2020. The female had travelled from London to be with her parents here and complained of being unwell after arriving home.

She subsequently tested positive for the virus while seeking medical attention.

Two years into the pandemic and as of 5th March, 2022, Antigua and Barbuda has recorded 7,453 laboratory confirmed cases of COVID-19. 7,297 have recovered, there are 21 active cases, and 135 deaths. 133 deaths were

directly linked to the virus and two were coincidental, it was reported.

Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Rhonda Sealey-Thomas said this should be a time of reflection on what transpired in the past, to examine the present and to advance, while keeping the spread of the virus under control.

The CMO added that a robust vaccination programme also contributed to where the country stands today.

"As a result of our very strong vaccination programme, and the hard work of our nurses, other mem-

bers of the healthcare team, members of the registration team, the commitment of the government in securing vaccines, we have vaccinated approximately 61,000 plus persons in Antigua and Barbuda...we are leading in the Eastern Caribbean in terms of vaccination coverage, and according to the World Health Organization statistics and PAHO statistics, we are the only country in the Eastern Caribbean that is set to reach WHO's target of vaccinating 70 percent of our population," Dr. Sealey-Thomas reiterated.

Local News

PM Browne, CARICOM firmly support Baroness Scotland

Prime Minister Gaston Browne is standing firm in his support for Baroness Patricia Scotland as she seeks a second term as Commonwealth Secretary General, a position that is also shared by other CARICOM leaders.

It is the long-held tradition that each elected Commonwealth Secretary General serves two terms at the helm of the 54-member grouping which allows each region the opportunity to have a turn at the top.

However, it appears that a challenge may be emerging from Africa, with the support of the Asia-Pacific region, which according to Browne, could fracture relations among member countries.

“Our Commonwealth family has, until now, held to the tradition of at least two terms for a secretary general and to the principle of rotation between regions,” said PM Browne in September 2021 in a letter penned to all members of

Commonwealth.

“This runs counter to the principle of rotation which would see Africa assuming the office of secretary general in 2024 when the Caribbean term would normally come to an end, followed in turn by the Pacific,” he continued.

Prime Minister Browne, who was then chairman of CARICOM, reiterated the regional grouping’s support for Baroness Scotland.

However, this did not stop Kenya’s President Uhuru Kenyatta from reportedly writing to leaders of neighbouring African nations seeking their support for his Cabinet Secretary for Defence, Monica Juma’s bid for the secretary general post.

Kenya has given no sign of backing down from opposing Baroness Scotland.

Commonwealth leaders will meet in Kigali, Rwanda in June this year when it is expected that a decision will be made.



Prime Minister Gaston Browne, left, and Baroness Patricia Scotland.

This meeting was to have occurred in 2021 but was postponed due to the pandemic.



Scotland, who was born in Dominica, meanwhile appears unphased by the commotion as she said recently, “I am delighted that the Commonwealth family can finally be reunited, four years on from our last CHOGM (Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting) in London.

“Our meetings in Rwanda will give us a real opportunity to reaffirm

the values that bind the Commonwealth together and focus on vital issues including recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, tackling climate change and poverty, boosting trade, and promoting sustainable development – all issues that can only be dealt with decisively through multilateral cooperation and mutual support.”

Baroness Scotland was elected secretary general of the Commonwealth during the last CHOGM in Malta in 2015.

The issue of her re-election was on the agenda of the recently concluded CARICOM Inter-sessional meeting in Belize. At the end of the summit, CARICOM leaders confirmed their “overwhelming support for the reelection of Baroness Patricia Scotland as Secretary General of the Commonwealth”.

Wed 09 Day		Wed 09 Night	
82°		74°	
23% E 16 mph		24% E 15 mph	
Mostly sunny skies. High 82F. Winds E at 10 to 20 mph.		Generally fair. Low 74F. Winds E at 10 to 20 mph.	
Humidity 71%	UV Index Extreme	Humidity 79%	UV Index 0 of 10
Sunrise 6:19 am	Sunset 6:15 pm	Moonrise 11:01 am	Moonset --
		Waxing Crescent	

Work permits are now transferable

There is more good news for non-nationals living in Antigua and Barbuda as the government has made the long overdue and very progressive step of making work permits transferable between employers.

In the past, if the holder of a work permit had a change of employment, it would involve the costly process of reapplying for a work permit, regardless of the time remaining on the existing permit.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne confirmed on the weekend that this will no longer hold, as policy changes have been made to ease the strain on non-nationals who are a vital part of the workforce.

Additionally, the require-

ment that non-nationals leave Antigua and Barbuda while their work permit application is being processed has also been abandoned. This too created a financial burden on many people who have made here their home. Once the application is being processed, they will be allowed to remain in the country until it is completed.

Antigua and Barbuda has for decades been a leader in its foreign policy, particularly as it relates to Caribbean nationals.

This has been evidenced by its welcome of people from across the region and continuous efforts to streamline immigration policies which make it easier for CARICOM nationals to live,



work and integrate into the community.

Presently, the government is showing its goodwill to non-nationals who may have fallen behind on regularising their status due to the pandemic.

During the immigration amnesty which runs until 30th April, fees associated with regularising one's immigration status have been reduced significantly and op-

portunities have been made available for non-nationals who meet specific requirements to fast track acquiring residency or citizenship.

The news that work permits are now transferable has been exuberantly welcomed by the non-national community who hail the move as "a step in the right direction" and a signal that Antigua and Barbuda is leading the way in true Caribbean integration.



SHERO

THE ULTIMATE ARTIST



Heather Doram is an Antiguan artist, actor, activist and educator, who is the designer of Antigua & Barbuda's National Dress. **She** has appeared in **film**, television and stage roles that include, *The Sweetest Mango*, *No Seed* and *The Vagina Monologues*: In 2002 she was awarded the Grand Cross of the Most Illustrious Order of Merit (Antigua & Barbuda) in recognition of her lifetime achievements.

Women's History Month



A Message from Antigua and Barbuda Transport Board



Local News



Teen gets three years for killing brother

The teen accused of the 2020 stabbing death of his 20-year-old brother has been sentenced to three years in prison.

On 10th October, 2020 the then 16-year-old stabbed his brother fatally in the upper body after an argument between the two escalated into a fight.

The teen was initially charged with murder, however the charge was reduced to manslaughter after investigations revealed that the older brother instigated the confrontation. He plead guilty on the lesser charge.

On Monday, Justice Ann-Marie Smith heard character testimony from the minor's teachers. They all reported that he was an excellent student who displayed tremendous potential.

Justice Smith also heard from the remorseful defendant who expressed deep regret for his actions and the death of his brother.

"I truly loved my brother despite



the situation," he said. "I will never make the same mistake again. The situation should have never reached so far."

At the end of the sentencing hearing, Justice Smith sentenced the young man to three years in prison, with credit given for the time he has served on

remand.

While in prison, he will continue his education and must participate in family and individual counselling.

The laws of Antigua and Barbuda prohibit the identity of minors involved in crimes from being published or from otherwise being identified.

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Unvaccinated Montserratians can now transit through Antigua and Barbuda

Antigua and Barbuda has relaxed the vaccination requirement for Montserratians who will only transit through the V. C. Bird International Airport.

For decades, Antigua and Barbuda has been the gateway for Montserratians who need to travel internationally, however this came to an abrupt halt with the coming of the COVID-19 pandemic.

After borders reopened and vaccines became available, Antigua and Barbuda was the first English-speaking nation in the region to reopen its borders to international visitors, with one condition – they had to be fully vaccinated to enter, or transit through any of its ports.

This meant that even with the unique bond shared between Antigua and Barbuda and Montserrat, travel between the countries was barred to those who were not vaccinated.

However, as Antigua and Barbuda continues to relax COVID-19 restrictions in the face of falling COVID-19 infection rates, the ban on unvaccinated transit passengers destined to or traveling from Montserrat has been lifted.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne has said while vigilance concerning COVID-19 remains paramount, the decision to relax border restrictions for Montserratians was made as part of the national transition from COVID-19 as a pandemic to an endemic disease and a return to normalcy.

“As we would have indicated months ago, COVID will be an epidemic and based on that situation we have to remain vigilant.

“We can’t throw caution to the wind and say COVID is gone, it’s going to be here for a long time. Not as devastating as it has been for the last

two years, but it does represent a threat especially to those who have underlying health conditions, so we are going to ask our people to be vigilant.

“We also made a special provision for in-transit passengers in and out of Montserrat, because as you know, Antigua and Barbuda is the gateway for Montserrat.

“So those who are unvaccinated and wish to transit in and out of Antigua on their way to Montserrat or Montserrat to another destination, we will accommodate them.

“I think the proviso is that they are not allowed to leave the precincts of the airport, or terminal for that matter, or the departure lounge for that matter. Those are the conditions that we have put in place, and they too will have to present a negative COVID test,” explained Prime Minister Gaston Browne.



Local News

CIBC FirstCaribbean celebrates female farmers on International Women's Day

Breaking the bias was the theme as CIBC FirstCaribbean, Antigua celebrated International Women's Day (IWD), 2022.

Three female farmers were celebrated and awarded with \$5,000 each by the bank at a short ceremony attended by the farmers and Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries & Barbuda Affairs, Hon. Samantha Marshall.

Country Head, Ladesa James-Williams, said that the bank based its decision this year on an explanation of the theme on the official IWD website – "Imagine a gender equal world. A world free of bias, stereotypes and discrimination. A world that's diverse, equitable and inclusive. A world where difference is valued and celebrated. Together we can forge women's equality. Collectively we can all #Break the bias."



Left to right: Branch Manager, Dawn Soleyn; farmers - Slyveneta Charles, Katlyann Burnette & Erica Phillip; Minister Samantha Marshall and Country Head Ladesa James-Williams.

Celebrate women's achievement. She said that in today's covid world, food production and food security are essential for equality. Raise awareness against bias. Take action for equality."

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ACP Cruise Ship

Calendar

Updated on February 25, 2022

March

Date	ETA	ETD	Cruise Ship	Cruise Line	Capacity*	Type	Assigned Berth*
06-Mar-22	8:00AM	9:00PM	Sea dream 1	SeaDream Yacht Club	110	T	Falmouth
06-Mar-22	9:00AM	6:00PM	Club Med 2	Club Med	239	T	Falmouth
07-Mar-22	7:30AM	7:00PM	Mein Schiff 2	TUI	2,900	T	Heritage Quay
07-Mar-22	10:00AM	6:00PM	Norwegian Dawn	Norwegian Cruise Line	2,244	T	Heritage Quay
08-Mar-22	6:00AM	5:00PM	Star Legend	Windstar Cruises	343	T	Nevis Pier
08-Mar-22	10:00AM	6:00PM	Grandeur of the seas	RCI	1,950	T	Nevis Pier
08-Mar-22	7:00AM	5:00PM	Britannia	P&O Cruises	3,611	T	Heritage Quay
08-Mar-22	9:00AM	6:00PM	Royal Clipper	Star Clippers	227	T	Falmouth
09-Mar-22	6:30AM	5:00PM	Wind Surf	Windstar Cruises	376	T	Heritage Quay
09-Mar-22	9:00AM	6:00PM	Star Flyer	Star Clippers	170	T	Barbuda
09-Mar-22	8:00AM	5:00PM	Explorer Of The Seas	RCI	3,282	T	Heritage Quay
10-Mar-22	9:00AM	6:00PM	Royal Clipper	Star Clippers	227	T	Barbuda
10-Mar-22	8:00AM	2:00PM	Silver Moon	Silversea Cruises	691	T	Heritage Quay
10-Mar-22	7:00AM	6:30PM	Star Flyer	Star Clippers	170	T	Falmouth
11-Mar-22	7:00AM	5:00PM	Marella Discovery	Marella Cruises	1,800	T	Heritage Quay

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curity have become even more important and our female farmers are playing a leading role in ensuring that we increase our food production.

"So, as we celebrate International Women's Day, CIBC FirstCaribbean is honoured and privileged to be able to present \$5,000 each to three of our top female farmers, Katyann Burnette, a poultry farmer; Erica Phillip, a crop farmer and Slyveneta Charles, a beekeeper.

"We trust that these funds will assist them as they continue to work for the benefit of all of us. It is even more commendable that our poultry farmer Katyann is just 19 years old. Congratulations."

In her remarks, Minister Marshall congratulated the bank for recognising the importance of food production and security and for recognising the role being played by female farmers.

"As we observe International Women's Day, CIBC FirstCaribbean is true to the theme – "#Break the bias", by rewarding and recognising our hard-working and dedicated female farmers. Hopefully, this will serve to inspire others."

Crop farmer, Erica Phillip, thanked the bank and added that the funds will assist her to expand her farm. At the moment her crops include cassava, papaya, pumpkins, sor-

rel in season and lemons. She is hoping to expand to more fruit crops.

Beekeeper Slyveneta Charles also thanked the bank and noted that beekeeping is growing in leaps and bounds in Antigua.

"We received funding from Integrated Health Outreach and the Beekeepers Association and was able to host two workshops.

"The first one graduated 29 women and the current one, which is ongoing will graduate a further 31 potential beekeepers."

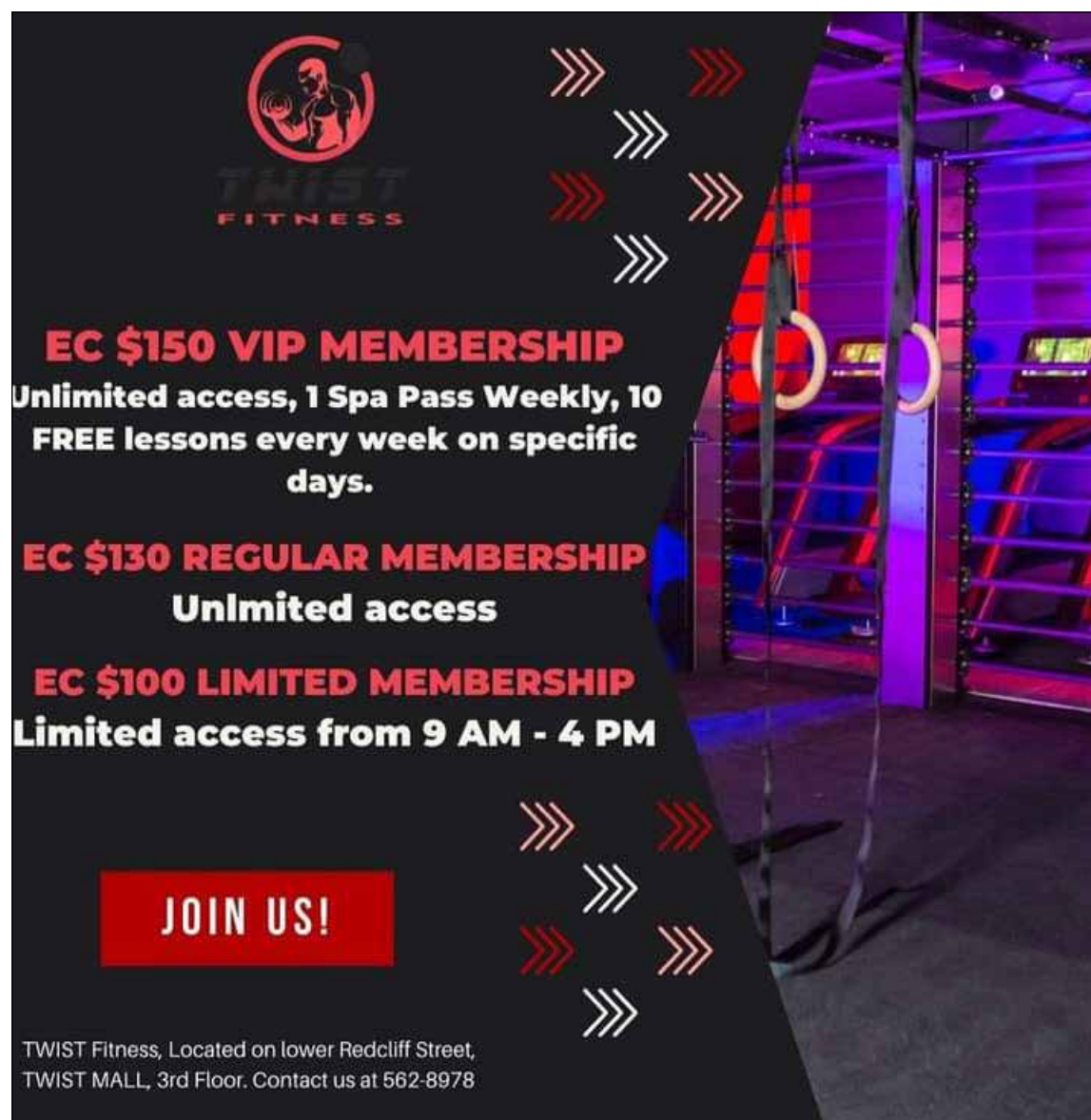
Poultry farmer Katyann



Bank officials, Minister Marshall and farmers displaying shirts specially made for IWD 2022

Burnette also thanked the bank for its wonderful gift and noted that at the moment she is only rearing layers but hoped to expand to broilers or meat birds.

The staff of CIBC FirstCaribbean will tour Eric Phillip's crop farm at Orange Valley on Thursday to get a hands-on experience of farming.



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The Black Experience



Colourism as Racism: Garvey, Du Bois and the Other Colour Line

By Ibram X. Kendi

More than one hundred years ago, Marcus Mosiah Garvey and thirteen associates gathered in a Harlem basement to found the New York branch of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA).

When the stocky and dark-skinned Garvey arrived in the United States in 1916, he had no plans to stay. He intended to raise funds for a school in Jamaica, modelled after Booker T. Washington's world-renowned Tuskegee Institute.

With Washington dead, Garvey sought out W.E.B. Du Bois at the New York office of the NAACP. Du Bois was absent, and Garvey said he was "unable to tell whether he was in a white office or that of the NAACP." The plethora of White and light-skinned people on the NAACP's staff, and all the light-skinned Black people in desirable positions in Black America, no doubt contributed to Garvey's decision to remain in Harlem and establish his UNIA chapter there in 1917.

Scholars were also taking note of these light-skinned people. Two years after Garvey's jarring visit to the NAACP's headquarters, sociologist and eugenicist Edward Byron Reuter finished *The Mulatto* in the United States (1918). From his base at the University of Iowa, Reuter made a name for himself arguing that anything Black people achieved was in fact the achievement of biracial, light-skinned people. He situated biracial, light-skinned people as a sort of racial middle class, below superior Whites, above inferior "full Blacks."

Reuter was the latest in a long line of racist ideologues of colourism in the United States, an ideological line that begins with towering Princeton theologian Samuel Stanhope



W.E.B. Du Bois (left) and Marcus Garvey (right)

Smith. In 1787, before members of the American Philosophical Society, some of whom would go on to write the U.S. Constitution that year, Smith praised "domestic servants" for having "advanced far before" the darker and Africanised "field slaves" through "acquiring the agreeable and regular features" of "civilized society"—light complexion, straight hair, thin lips.

Colourism, like all forms of racism, rationalises colour inequities with racist ideas, by claiming the inequities between dark and light-skinned people are not due to discrimination against dark-skinned people, but the inferiorities of dark-skinned people.

Racist ideas are not all the same because Black people are not all the same. There are many types of racist ideas demeaning the different types of Black people, including Black women and Black men, and light-skinned and dark-skinned people. A light skin is beautiful because of the striking resemblance to beautiful White people is a different type of racist idea than a

dark skin is ugly because the striking dissemblance from beautiful White people.

This brand of colourism was antithetical to Garvey's philosophy, and Garveyites made it their mission to attack colourism and the man they believed to be one of its chief arbiters — W.E.B. Du Bois. It was only a matter of time before Garvey and Du Bois became locked in debate, as Du Bois and Washington had done a decade earlier. Ironically, though, the Washington Du Bois debate is remembered, while this more enduring debate between Garvey and Du Bois has largely been forgotten.

Du Bois and the Talented Tenth felt threatened by Garvey's exposure of the touchy reality of light skin privilege. "Garvey is an extraordinary leader of men," Du Bois admitted in *The Crisis* at the end of 1920. But it had been a mistake for him to try to bring Caribbean colour politics to the United States. "American Negroes recognised

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The Black Experience

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no colour line in or out of the race," Du Bois wrote, "and they will in the end punish the man who attempts to establish it."

It was certainly the case that light-skinned Blacks and biracial people in the Caribbean had more privileges than their counterparts in the United States. But to claim Black people in the United States were colour-blind in 1920? It was probably the silliest statement of Du Bois' serious career.

He sounded as oblivious as the racists who had angered him for decades by discounting the existence of the other colour line. In denying this colour line, Du Bois discounted the existence of colour discrim-

ination, in effect blaming darker Blacks for their disproportionate poverty.

Du Bois had eyes. He knew light-skinned people dominated the most desirable political and economic positions available to Black people. In his own *Talented Tenth* essay in 1903, he named twenty-one present and past Black leaders, and all of them except Phillis Wheatley were light-skinned and biracial.

He probably heard the circulating Black children's rhyme: "If you're white, you're right / If you're yellow, you're mellow / If you're brown, stick around / If you're black, get back." Du Bois knew elite, light-skinned people were still using brown paper bags and

rulers to bar dark-skinned folks from churches, jobs, civic groups, historically Black colleges, Black fraternities and sororities, and even neighbourhoods.

Du Bois was probably not oblivious. More likely, he and his light-skinned peers felt their light-skinned privilege was threatened by discussions of colourism and colour equality, not unlike Whites who felt their White privilege threatened by discussions of racism and racial equality. And so, Du Bois copied his enemies: he used racist ideas and his punishing power to silence the antiracist challenge to colour discrimination.

However, Garvey was not completely antiracist in this debate. By 1920, Du

Bois was reeling from the rise of eugenics and influenced by anthropologist Franz Boas, allowing him to shed his earlier biological conceptions of race: that the racial groups were genetically distinct (Geneticists have since proven that the races are 99% genetically alike, and there is more genetic diversity between people of African descent than between Black people and other people).

Garvey still believed wholeheartedly in the fallacy of biological racial distinctions—in there being such a thing as Black blood and White blood. He thereby joined with eugenicists and Klansmen in looking down on biracial people and

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The Black Experience



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light-skinned people, in hailing President Warren G. Harding when he said in 1921: "racial amalgamation there cannot be."

Instead of viewing light-skinned Blacks as naturally equal to dark-skinned Blacks from an antiracist standpoint, Garvey fashioned the other less acknowledged ideological side of colourism. Garvey more or less looked down on light-skinned Blacks as inferior, holding dark-skins as the standard of Blackness, as some Black power activists did fifty years ago, and as some Black activists do today.

I used to be reeling from this other side of colourism. I can still remember when I was an awakening undergraduate student at Florida A&M University. I made it my mission not to date light-skinned women. My friends thought I had lost my mind. I desired dark-

skinned women: the darker the better, and I looked down on my friends who desired light-skinned women: the lighter, the better. I hardly realized my own racist hypocrisy—that in turning colourism on its head I was still exhibiting colourism.

And so was Garvey. But to be clear, Garvey was neither a eugenicist nor a segregationist. In contrast to eugenicists who were advocating White racial purity and opposing interracial reproduction due to the intrusion of inferior Black blood, Garvey advocated Black racial purity, opposing interracial reproduction due to the intrusion of different White blood. We should not confuse Garvey's separatists, who actually believed in separate but equal, with segregationists, who really believed in separate but unequal.

We should also not keep Du Bois as a static figure. By the 1930s, he had

shed much of his elitism, and his elitism and colourism seemed to be interspersed. He had moved to the right side of history, this time engaging in the very public debate against the new NAACP executive secretary, Walter White. A strident integrationist and assimilationist, raging the new-fangled Black nationalism of Du Bois, White once reportedly expressed that "unmixed" Negroes were "inferior, infinitely inferior now."

From an antiracist perspective, no group of Black folk are inferior—not now, not ever—not dark-skins, not light-skins. A century ago, both Du Bois and Garvey were wrong. We have to recognise light-skin privilege and the other colour line. We have to recognise that dark skin is not the essential and pure standard of Blackness. We have to recognise colourism as racism.

9:00am-10:30am

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Why uncommon baby names are surging

By Aysha Imtiaz

Uncommon baby names are rising across the globe, even in more traditional societies. Why are parents increasingly determined to make children's names 'unique'?

My first visit to Pakistan dismantled any precious notions I had about my name's uniqueness. While a rare curiosity in California, here, it seemed, I met an Aysha, Ayesha or Aisha at every corner.

"It's like you opened a baby name book and didn't even look past 'A'," I'd tell my parents, vowing that when I had kids, I'd choose something out-of-this-world. And so I did, naming my daughter Sidrat-ul-Muntaha, after an enigmatic lote tree believed to mark the utmost boundary in the seventh heaven – literally the point of extremity none can pass.

Baby naming is an emotionally charged process. Parents worry about the long-term impact of a child's name, and feel they need to do the best job at setting up a child for success. That's because we know names matter; our given name forges our identity, influences name stereotypes, may dictate the types of jobs we pursue and even predict career achievements.

The trends around how parents choose names for their children are a product of our evolving cultures; they shift as aspirations for children shift. Research shows today's rising popularity of unique baby names reflects a move from collectivism to individualistic societies, and provides important contextual clues about whom parents want their children to be. Globally, it seems, parents increasingly value unique names to help children stand out, instead of fit in.

From tradition to expression

In previous centuries, tradition-driv-



[Photo credit: Getty Images]

en name conformity was the presiding impulse, explains Laura Wattenberg, founder of namerology.com and author of *The Baby Name Wizard*.

"Parents simply did what had always been done," she says, pointing out that in England, John and William, for example, were top boy names from the 1200s to 1930s. "According to [statistics] compiled by economist Douglas Galbi, in the 1600s, the top three names for boys and girls accounted for fully half of [England's] population," she explains.

This is because naming conventions were founded in religious and ancestral ties. For example, scriptural names were popular, and English Puritans sometimes named their children after moral attributes, such as Faith or Mercy.

Similarly, Muslims in Arab and South Asian countries extolled religiosity. Traditional Muslim names include eminent historical figures in Islam (such as Muhammad, after the Holy Prophet PBUH, his contemporaries, the Umm-ul-Momineen or his wives – including Hazrat Aisha RA – and Islamic state caliphs). Often, names underscored religious devotion, such as any of the 99 names of Allah with the preceding word 'Abdul', meaning servant

of. Uniquely regulated Arab naming traditions also had lineage entrenched, with names frequently prefaced by words such as 'Bint-e-' (daughter of), 'Umm-e-' (mother of), 'Abu' (father of) or 'Ibn' (son of).

Depending on the pace at which different regions developed, not all these traditions endured. Weakening cultural ties and more mobile populations around the Industrial Revolution made young parents' choices less dictated by extended family and local customs in the Western world, explains Wattenberg. "Names increasingly became a mode of self-expression... the whole culture moved toward greater celebration of personal freedom and individuality."

Prior research has established the steady decrease in common names in the US from the 1950s, especially from 1983, and a recent macro-level study analysing 348 million American baby names across 137 years (1880 to 2017) showed Baby Boomers increased the number of novel names per thousand people four-fold for boys and 2.75 times for girls.

"The Baby Boomers were the first parents who wanted to be cool, and who

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Lifestyle



cont'd from pg 13

wanted their children to be cool as well,” says Pamela Redmond, whose 1988 book *Beyond Jennifer & Jason* examined the cohort as the first generation to reject many of the ethnic and religious naming conventions of the past.

And with an amplified desire for distinctiveness thanks to the rise of the internet in the 1990s, millennials took it a step further. “[These parents] became used to the model of a username – your unique identifier in a social system,” says Wattenberg. “Parents would type a full name they were considering into a search engine and worry because it was ‘taken’.” The 1990s also brought a new, surprisingly powerful wrinkle: baby name statistics ... Annual rankings of popular names made people feel competitive. But instead of wanting to be number one, everybody wanted to avoid

the top of the charts.”

Today, parents signal their style and values with names, explains Redmond, who is also the CEO of Nameberry, a name-consulting business that provides parents with guidance on how to choose a new name. “We hear a lot of parents saying they want to give their sons gender-neutral names to signal feminist values, or honour family in a way that’s in step with current styles – so grandpa Arthur may get honoured by giving your son the middle name Bear, Arthur’s meaning.”

‘A valid indicator of individualism’

Even Japan, which has been a traditional, collectivist society for centuries, is showing a shift away from naming traditions. According to a 2021 study analysing 8,000 baby names between 2004 and 2018, the rate of unique names is increasing in

Japan – and it’s an indicator of rising individualism.

Study author Yuji Ogiwara, from the Institute of Arts and Sciences, Tokyo University of Science, defined ‘unique names’ as ones with low frequency (one per 1,000 names) among the baby cohort. The names didn’t necessarily sound different to more common ones; complexity in Japanese names (stemming from the use of Chinese characters with multiple readings) means uniqueness can be attained in different ways. For example, one name can have multiple different readings — at least 18 for the boy’s name 寛人, which can be read as Hiroto, Daisho and Sora amongst others, and 14 for the girl’s name 月夜, like Yua, Yunari or Meia.

So, parents might choose unique variations of a name by abbreviating common readings of Chinese char-

acters, choosing less common characters or reading them with foreign pronunciation corresponding to semantic meaning. For instance, (meaning ‘moon’) is usually read as ‘tsuki’ or ‘zuki’, but is uniquely read ‘runa’, corresponding to the Latin word ‘luna’ for moon, explains Ogiwara.

“The index of baby names has been confirmed to be a valid indicator of individualism,” he continues. “Empirical evidence shows that common names are less frequently given to babies in more individualistic nations”, such as the United States, Canada and New Zealand. Noticing the paucity of similar research in Japan, his work seeks to address the phenomenon in more than an anecdotal context and root it in societal shifts. In other research, Ogiwara contextualised this trend as part of other ‘indices of individualism’, such as Japan’s rising marriage-to-divorce ratio, and the decrease in three-generation households over 60 years.

Overall, the trend of parents reconceptualising interpretation, pronunciation or spelling to seek novelty in names while staying relatively within the ambit of the predominant naming conventions is a powerful impulse. In Pakistan, for example, while religiosity still prevails, more acts of worship are standing in as names, such as Azaan (call to prayer) or Ayat (a Quranic verse), instead of histor-

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UPDATED SCHEDULE

cont'd from pg 14

ically important names of the prophets, suggesting that parents are thinking more laterally to find names that are still religious, but not common.

In Japan, Yukiko Uchida, professor of social and cultural psychology at Kyoto University, Japan, roots the rise of more unusual names in multiple factors that eroded people's trust in a collective society. She cites Japan's economic decline, debate over demographic issues and the aging population, and the emergence of problems such as social withdrawal and NEETs [individuals Not in Education, Employment or Training]. This, she says, led to a sense that people increasingly had to "survive with their own uniqueness, not rely on traditional group belongingness".

Studies from China also show unique baby names are one of many ways to fulfil rising NFU (Need For Uniqueness), which is a product of increasing autonomy and freedom, paired with declining perceived importance of traditional Chinese cultural practices and collectivism.

Additionally, research around the rate at which unique baby girl names are rising in Japan gives insight into parental aspirations. One of Ogihara's most compelling findings is that gender is a factor in cultural naming practises; in Japan, unique names have increased more rapidly for girls than boys. The Chinese NFU study, meanwhile, revealed

girl names were more unique than boy names at one point in time, a finding consistent with prior research revealing girls were less likely to receive popular names. Whether the gender difference is measured at one point in time or mapped out as a rate of increase, in the context of traditionally conformist cultures such as China and Japan, it represents a quiet hope of parents for their daughters to be more unique than their sons.

Previously, parents in Japan may have named their daughters to conform and be "interdependent, ordinary and concerned with group harmony to fit into society", explains Ogihara. Now, "more parents hope for their daughters [to] become more independent, unique and autonomous to fit into changing societal norms and expectations. Thus, it's assumed they [give them more] unique names".

Dominant parenting aspirations

As these trends play out, should we expect a continuing boom of original, uncommon names?

Uchida predicts that in Japan, the trend towards unusual names will ultimately hit a ceiling. After all, there's a limit to the number of kanji (characters) that can be used in names, she points out, and social stigmas do persist.

"After the increase in the number of 'kira-kira' names (eccentric and unique names) in Japan, a stigma was attached... such as

'coming from a low class'. Conversely, names that are too traditional tend to be avoided because of being 'old-fashioned', so I think there will be a continuing [but not increasing] trend in favour of names that are reasonably stylish and moderately unique."

And chasing unique names may not always be the answer or ticket to success parents want it to be, anyway. "Parents have the instinct that choosing a distinctive name will give their child an advantage in life. It's a loving impulse, but in practical terms it's not clear that it works that way," says Watenberg, because after all, "Popular means well-liked – and highly distinctive names

can be polarising. People may point to successful celebrities with unusual names, but for every Madonna and Beyoncé there's a Michael Jackson, Emma Thompson, Sam Smith and Elizabeth Taylor," she concludes.

Ultimately, for parents, giving a child a name is an act of love, influenced both by personal dreams and cultural transmission of values. "Parents come to us for help in finding a name that's tailored perfectly to them, more than one that's different from anyone else," says Redmond.

Uchida agrees. "Rather than 'standing out' in a group or 'becoming a star', I think it's a more modest desire for their kids to live their own life."

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Technology

Apple introduces new iPad Air, iPhone SE, Mac desktop computer

By Mark Gurman

It is likely to be Apple's most prolific year for new product releases.

Apple Inc. introduced 5G versions of its low-end iPhone SE and iPad Air tablet, as well as a redesigned Mac desktop computer and faster processor, kicking off what's likely to be its most prolific year yet for new product releases.

Apple unveiled the devices during a virtual event Tuesday that it called "Peek performance," looking to keep up its momentum following a record-setting holiday quarter that exceeded Wall Street's expectations. Chief Executive Officer Tim Cook also announced plans to bring Major League Baseball games to the company's TV+ streaming service.

The presentation included a new Apple processor named M1 Ultra that the company called the most powerful personal-computer chip ever. The product is part of Apple's yearslong shift away from using Intel Corp. processors in favor of its own components.

The new desktop computer, called the Mac Studio, features the M1 Ultra chip and is aimed at app developers, photo editors and video creators. Apple also unveiled a separate 27-inch monitor that is far cheaper



Apple CEO Tim Cook announces a new products during a special event, the first of what is expected to be several product launches this year, including additional Macs and iPads, as well as the iPhone 14 and new smartwatches [File: Brooks Kraft via Reuters]

er than the current model, coming in at \$1,599.

There were few major surprises at the event, and the shares slipped less than 1% to \$158 after it concluded. They have fallen about 10% this year, in line with a broader stock slump.

Bloomberg News first reported on the new iPhone SE and iPad Air in January of this year and on the Mac Studio computer and lower-cost monitor in January 2021.

The event was the first of what's expected to be several product launches this year, with Apple also readying additional Macs and iPads, as well as the iPhone 14 and new smartwatches.

And the company may preview its first mixed aug-

mented- and virtual-reality headset later this year.

The new iPhone is Apple's first update to the SE line since 2020. The model, which will continue to come in black, white and red, will have a slightly higher price: \$429, up from \$399. But it has 5G network support, a faster A15 processor and other features.

The iPhone SE continues to look similar to the iPhone 8 from 2017, including a home button with Touch ID — rather than the Face ID used by higher-end models.

It has a 4.7-inch screen, making it the smallest iPhone available. But the addition of 5G makes the device far more competitive in the marketplace and may help the company to lure

Android users and consumers with older iPhones.

Apple doesn't break out sales of individual iPhone models, but the smartphone represents its biggest monemaymaker overall, bringing in over half of its revenue in the last fiscal year, or about \$192 billion.

The SE first debuted in 2016 amid calls for a smaller and cheaper iPhone, and was previously updated at the beginning of the pandemic.

On Tuesday, Apple also added new green color options to the iPhone 13, helping keep that model in the news until the iPhone 14 with an updated design arrives later this year.

The new iPhone SE and \$599 iPad Air, which sports an M1 chip, will be available for ordering on March 11, before reaching stores a week later.

Apple began taking orders for the Mac Studio and monitor on Tuesday, ahead of its release on March 18. The version with the M1 Ultra chip starts at \$3,999, while a lower-end version is \$1,999.

The chip has 20 so-called CPU cores, 64 graphics-processing cores and a 32-core neural engine — designed to make it easier for developers to compile code, render 3D graphics and work with video, Apple said.

UWI council rejects recommendation to increase student fees

Jamaica Gleaner – The council of the University of the West Indies (UWI) has rejected a recommendation to increase student fees.

The recommendation was made in the July 2020 Chancellor's Report on Governance.

The commission, chaired by Sir Dennis Byron, had laid out a financial model which would result in a 100 percent fee increase.

The commission had proposed a 60:40 cost-sharing model with 40 percent of tuition to be paid by students.

Currently, students pay tuition fees equivalent to 20 percent of the cost of academic programmes.

In March 2021, Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir Hilary Beckles had also rejected the recommenda-



The commission had proposed a 60:40 cost-sharing model with 40 percent of tuition to be paid by students. Currently, students pay tuition fees equivalent to 20 percent of the cost of academic programmes.

tion.

“The idea of moving from students paying a maximum of 20 percent up to 40 percent, I’m sure the public will say ‘This is a huge leap’. What would that mean for enrolment? What would it mean for access?” Beckles had questioned at

the time.

The council held its final deliberations last Friday, following almost two years of consultations and the submission of the report from the review committee led by University Registrar, Dr Maurice D. Smith.

“This would pose an ex-

istential threat to the university, Caribbean society, and economy. The review committee described this recommendation as being outside the terms of reference of the Byron Commission and residing in the domain of Governments constituted as the University Grants Committee,” a UWI spokesperson said in a press release on Monday.

The review committee noted that there were no specific objections to 92 of the 95 recommendations.

The university council and the review committee also rejected a recommendation to abolish the University Finance and General Purposes Committee (U-F&GPC) and the Campus F&GPC, which are chaired by the Vice-Chan-

cont'd on pg 18

Belize: Posthumous pardon proposed for Nora Parham who was hanged

CMC - What has been described for over 50 years as a Belizean tragedy will be corrected for Nora Parham, who was executed for the murder of her partner, who was said to be physically abusive to her.

On this International Women's Day, Belize's Cabinet announced that after discussion, Cabinet gave its full support for the proposal from Minister of Human Development, Dolores Balderamos Garcia, for Nora Parham to be granted a posthumous pardon to correct the historic wrong done in 1963.

Parham is the only woman to have

been sent to the gallows in Belize (then British Honduras). She was convicted by an all-male jury for the murder of her police partner, Ketchell Trapp, by immolation.

Parham, who was 36-years-old at the time, had eight children. As the years passed many Belizeans called for her to be pardoned.

Cabinet today says it is of the view that this posthumous pardon will go a long way to focus attention on the issue of domestic violence.

It says the Governor-General will be kindly requested to ask the Belize Advisory Council to so recommend.



Nora Parham

Regional News



Guyana makes submission to ICJ in land border dispute with Venezuela

CMC - Guyana Tuesday submitted its Memorial on the Merits of the border dispute with Venezuela to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) with Georgetown remaining steadfast in ensuring there is a juridical settlement to the matter.

In a statement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation said the submission forms part of the requirement by the ICJ following its December 18, 2020, decision that confirmed the Court's jurisdiction to decide on the merits of Guyana's claims.

The matter is before the Court pursuant to the decision of the Secretary General of the United Nations under the 1966 Geneva Agreement, by which the parties conferred upon the Secretary General the authority to determine the means by which the controversy between Guyana and Venezuela shall be settled.

The statement reminded that Guyana wants the ICJ to declare as valid, the Arbitral

Award of 1899 determining the boundary and binding on the two countries and that the boundary established by that Award and the 1905 Agreement demarcating it is the lawful boundary between Guyana and Venezuela.

Venezuela is against the Court making any determination, since it believes the ICJ has no jurisdiction to address the matter. But the Court disagreed and established that it has the jurisdiction

But the Court has agreed in its earlier decision that it has jurisdiction to do so. Guyana now looks to the Court's judicial process and its settlement of the matter under the rule of law.

"This year sees the 56th anniversary of the 1966 Geneva Agreement. Guyana considers that the true connotation of that Agreement is in contributing in good faith to the fulfilment of its true meaning and intent by participating fully in the cumin juridical process deriving from it. Hence the submission today to the In-



[Photo: iStock]

ternational Court of Justice of Guyana's Memorial on the Merits as required by the Court," the statement.

Following their Inter-Sessional Summit in Belize on Wednesday, Caribbean Community (CARICOM) leaders as they have done in the past, "reiterated their full support for the ongoing judicial process that is intended to bring a peaceful and definitive end to the long-standing controversy between the two countries and urged Venezuela to participate in the process.

"Heads of Government reaffirmed their firm and unwavering support for the

maintenance and preservation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Guyana," the regional leaders added.

Guyana said an estimated GUY\$660 million has been budgeted for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation to pay legal fees in the border case.

In March 2018, Guyana moved to the ICJ to challenge the non-participation of Venezuela, over its disagreement on the legal validity and binding effect of the October 3, 1899 Award. Venezuela had maintained that the ICJ was without jurisdiction to hear the case and had not participated in the matter.

However, in a December 18, 2020, 12-4 majority ruling, the ICJ upheld that it has jurisdiction to entertain Guyana's contention concerning the validity of the 1899 Award about the frontier between British Guiana and Venezuela, and the related question of the definitive settlement of the land boundary.

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cellor and Principals, respectively.

The Byron Report had proposed that these committees be replaced by executive committees, chaired by the chancellor or his nominee.

"Described as the core of the university's management which reports to council from which it takes policy directives; council was advised that the abolition of the U-F&GPC would impair the capacity of the vice-chancellor and his executive

management team to maintain the regional character of the university. "Its abolishment, it was proffered, would weaken the implementation of a 'ONE UWI' vision and mandate as embedded in the Treaty of Chaguaramas," the spokesperson noted.

The UWI's council also argued that replacing the committees with executive sub-committees would be considered a destabilisation of the democratic, inclusionary, and diverse intellectual character of the academic institution.

U.S. spy chiefs say Putin may escalate despite Ukraine setbacks

Reuters - Leaders of U.S. spy agencies said on Tuesday that Russian President Vladimir Putin may intensify the assault on Ukraine despite military setbacks and economic hardships resulting from international sanctions, setting up "an ugly next few weeks."

They estimated that 2,000 to 4,000 Russian troops had died and said Russia was feeling the effects of sanctions, but the situation could become much worse for Ukrainians, with food and water supplies in Kyiv possibly running out within two weeks.

"Our analysts assess that Putin is unlikely to be deterred by such setbacks and instead may escalate," Director of National Intelligence Avril Haines told the annual House of Representatives Intelligence Committee hearing on worldwide threats, where she testified with other intelligence agency directors.

Haines said Putin's announcement that he was elevating his nuclear force-



Director of National Intelligence Avril Haines testifies before a House (Select) Intelligence Committee hearing on diversity in the intelligence community, on Capitol Hill in Washington, U.S., October 27, 2021. REUTERS/Elizabeth Frantz

es' readiness was "extremely unusual" since the 1960s, but that intelligence analysts had not observed changes in Russia's nuclear posture beyond what was detected during previous international crises.

"We also have not observed force-

wide nuclear posture changes that go beyond what we've seen in prior moments of heightened tensions," Haines said.

William Burns, director of the Central Intelligence Agency, echoed Haines' assessment that Russia is unlikely to back down.

"I think Putin is angry and frustrated right now. He's likely to double down and try to grind down the Ukrainian military with no regard for civilian casualties," Burns said.

Burns said he and CIA analysts do not see how Putin can accomplish his goal of taking Kyiv and replacing President Volodymyr Zelenskiy's government with a pro-Moscow or puppet leadership.

"I fail to see how he can produce that kind of an end game and where that leads, I think, is for an ugly next few weeks in which he doubles down ... with scant regard for civilian casualties," Burns told the committee.

Islamic State claims Pakistan bombing that killed 5 troops

AP - The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for an attack on a security convoy in southwestern Pakistan early Tuesday that killed at least five soldiers, according to a monitoring group.

Pakistani police said the explosion in Baluchistan province was caused by a roadside bomb, but the claim of responsibility cites an IS suicide bomber as carrying out the attack, according to the U.S.-based SITE Intelligence Group, which monitors militant messaging.

The conflicting reports could not be immediately explained.

It was the second attack in less than a week claimed by the IS regional affiliate known as Islamic State in Khorasan Province. The militant group is headquartered in neighbouring Afghanistan.

Last week, an IS suicide bomber targeted a Shiite mosque during Friday prayers in the north western city of Peshawar, killing 63 worshippers and wounding nearly 200.

In Tuesday's attack in



People walk amid the damages at the prayer hall after a bomb blast inside a mosque during Friday prayers in Peshawar, Pakistan, March 4, 2022. (Reuters)

the district of Sibi, police also said that 28 people, mostly police officers, were wounded. Wazir Murree,

a local police official, said rescuers transported the dead and wounded to hos-

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Florida lawmakers pass 'Don't Say Gay' bill

Florida's Senate has passed a bill to ban discussions of sexual orientation or gender identity in primary schools.

Governor Ron DeSantis is expected to sign the measure, which would bar teachers from teaching these topics to children under 10 years old.

Critics say the bill will isolate LGBT youth. Proponents say it is about empowering parents on education issues.

Activists have dubbed it the Don't Say Gay bill. It is officially known as the Parental Rights in Education Bill.

The Republican-backed legislation passed on Tuesday. It prohibits any instruction about sexual orientation or gender identity between kindergarten and third grade - when students are roughly between five and nine years old.

It also calls on school districts to avoid LGBT topics "when not age-appropriate or developmentally appropriate for students".

State laws that ban or constrain the discussion of LGBT life in classrooms - sometimes called "no promo homo" laws by critics - are not uncommon.

Four US states - Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma and Texas - currently have laws on the books that explicitly prohibit or limit sex education to heterosexual activity.

The Florida bill also extends to student support services, including counseling, and grants parents the power to sue schools directly if they believe an educator has broken the law.

Representative Joe Harding, who sponsored the bill in Florida's statehouse, has said that the bill will be simply about "empowering parents".

Critics say that vague language in the law could result in teachers and students being prevented from discussing their lives even outside the classroom.

"This is really about making it impossible for LGBT young people to



speak for themselves," said Nadine Smith, the executive director of advocacy group Equality Florida.

Todd and Jeff Delmay - one of the first same-sex couples to get married in Florida - say this bill would make it impossible for their 11-year-old son Blake to talk freely about his dads.

"We have fought and won these battles to adopt children and to be a family and to be together," Todd told the BBC. "And they are now trying to find every way in which they can erase us and our families."

And the couple warned the bill could marginalise

LGBT youth as they come to terms with their identity.

"A child's need for acceptance in a safe space should always take precedence over some parents' belief," Todd said.

The Florida Family Policy Council, a conservative group that supports the bill, said in a statement last week that it was "necessary because government schools in the US have become ideological, political and are more interested in shaping a child's politics and sexual inclinations than they are in teaching academics of reading, writing, math, and education".

Gov DeSantis - widely regarded as a possible 2024 White House contender - endorsed the bill last month, saying it was part of a wider effort to make the education system "transparent" to parents.

The Florida bill is part of a fierce debate taking place across the US over children's education, how schools operate and what they teach.

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pitals, where an emergency was declared. He said some of wounded were in critical condition.

Local media said the bombing happened near an open area where an annual cultural show was being held. Earlier in the day, Pakistan's President Arif Alvi attended the festival. The targeted convoy was part of the security deployment surrounding Alvi's visit. The bombing took place hours after he had left the area.

Baluchistan has been the scene of a

long-running insurgency by various Baluch secessionist groups that for decades have staged attacks on security forces and police to press their demands for independence.

Although authorities say they have quelled the insurgency, violence has continued in the province. Local militants and IS also have a presence there.

According to the claim of responsibility, the attacker was a Pakistani national who "detonated his explosive vest amid a gathering of soldiers and policemen," SITE said.



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Sports News



Premier League suspends broadcast deal with Russia because of Ukraine invasion

The Premier League has suspended its broadcast deal with Russia following the country's invasion of neighbouring Ukraine.

The move will take effect immediately, meaning Thursday's four matches will not be shown in the country.

The matter took only 15 minutes of a four-hour meeting of all 20 clubs in London on Tuesday to agree.

The English top flight also says it will donate £1m to support the people of Ukraine.

The TV rights for the Premier League were owned by the Rambler Group. The company was in its final year of a three-year deal to show matches in Russia.



There were shows of support for Ukraine across Premier League games last weekend [Reuters]

In a separate move, the Football Association has also suspended its deal with Russia.

That means none of this month's FA Cup quarter-final matches will be shown.

The Premier League says it condemns Russia's invasion of Ukraine and that its clubs unanimously

agreed the move.

"We call for peace and our thoughts are with all those impacted," the Premier League said in a statement.

"The £1m donation will be made to the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) to deliver humanitarian aid directly to those in

need."

Last weekend, Premier League clubs showed solidarity with Ukraine as captains wore special armbands in Ukrainian colours, while stadium screens displayed 'Football Stands Together' in front of the country's blue and yellow flag.

It is understood there will be no repeat of the pro-Ukraine branding that took place around last weekend's games.

However, clubs have been cleared to produce their own response if they wish.

The English Football League (EFL) says it has also suspended broadcast feeds of its matches in Russia.

Alexander Zverev given suspended eight-week ban

Tennis' world number three, Alexander Zverev, has been handed a suspended eight-week ban from ATP-sanctioned events following an investigation into his conduct at the Mexican Open last month.

The German was thrown out of the tournament in Acapulco after he repeatedly hit the chair of umpire Alessandro Germani with his racket at the end of a doubles match. Zverev almost hit the leg of the official at one point, and while he apologised publicly for the incident and privately to Germani, ATP's senior vice-president of rules and

competition, Miro Bratoev, conducted a review into the behaviour of the 24-year old which was concluded this week.

An ATP statement on Tuesday read: "The review determined that Zverev committed Aggravated Behaviour under the Player Major Offences section of ATP Rules. As a result, Zverev has been issued an additional fine of US\$25,000 and a suspension for a period of eight weeks from any ATP sanctioned event.

"However, the fine and suspension are withheld on the condition that, over a probation period ending 22



February 2023, one year of the incident, the player does not incur a further Code Violation."

It means Zverev will now be walking on a tight-rope with a further code violation for unsportsmanlike

conduct, or verbal or physical abuse towards "an official, opponent, spectator or any other person" on-court will result in an eight week suspension being implemented, subject to any personal process.

CWI unveils Fancraze and Crictos.com as new Test & NFT partners of the West Indies

WIC - Cricket West Indies (CWI) announced on Tuesday FanCraze and their Crictos.com digital collectibles programme as new partners of the West Indies Test team and of CWI.

The Crictos.com branding will appear on the playing shirts of the West Indies Men's Team throughout the Apex Test Series between the West Indies and England which starts today, Tuesday March 8, at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua.

CWI and FanCraze have signed a multi-year partnership to develop an NFT programme and metaverse products featuring the West Indies players and archive. Crictos launched in 2021 as the digital collectibles programme partner of the International Cricket Council (ICC).

The partnership signifies the start of developing the official digital collectibles for the West Indies teams featuring current players and key archive moments.

This will give West Indies fans all around the world the chance to own pieces of West Indies cricketing history through innovative blockchain technology, which will also provide more opportunities for dig-

ital trading cards, games and experiences based on the West Indies men's and women's players.

In addition to the Test shirt, the long-term partnership will see FanCraze branding, links and communication appear on key pitch and broadcast assets for West Indies home internationals and throughout CWI's social and website fan platforms.

"We are excited to welcome FanCraze as a new partner for Cricket West Indies and the West Indies teams, especially with Fancraze's Crictos NFT branding to appear on the West Indies Test shirt for the forthcoming Apex Series," said CWI's Commercial Director, Dominic Warne.

"This partnership goes far beyond the pitch and will see CWI and Fancraze combine to build archive and trading card NFT products using leading blockchain technology and take West Indies cricket into the fast-developing metaverse.

Not only will the partnership create the chance for fans around the world to own famous pieces of our amazing West Indies cricket history, it will provide significant investment into cricket in the Caribbean and contribute to the players'



pool for years to come."

Anshum Bhambri, CEO of FanCraze remarked: "We are very proud to partner with Cricket West Indies and bring to life NFTs representing the most passionate and naturally-gifted cricketers the world has ever seen. NFTs are fast becoming a movement and are enabling a direct relationship between all types of IP owners and their fans.

NFTs represent culture and there is no better team than the West Indies to take cricket into the metaverse. FanCraze is building an experience that would enable

fans to collect CWI digital assets, engage with play-to-earn games and utilities, and own digital land."

The Apex Test Series is being contested for the newly minted Richards-Botham trophy, which was officially unveiled on Sunday by icons Sir Vivian Richards and Lord Ian Botham. The series bowls off on March 8-12 in Antigua. The second Apex Test will be played at Kensington Oval, Barbados from March 16-20, with the climax in the third Apex Test at the Grenada National Stadium, Grenada on March 24-28.

England's Jonny Bairstow cracks unbeaten Century on Day 1 of the Apex Test Series

Jonny Bairstow started his day as the glue holding England together and he ended it with an unbeaten century that put his side firmly back in the game against West Indies in Antigua.

Bairstow, whose retention was among their least contentious calls after he was England's only centurion of that fateful campaign in Australia and scorer of a hundred in the warm-up fixture for this match, came in with the tourists teetering on 48 for 4 inside the first hour and a half.

He combined with fellow experienced hand Ben Stokes for a rebuilding partnership worth 67 for the fifth wicket and then put on 99 runs with Ben Foakes to raise England to a respect-

able score at stumps.

But the day belonged to Bairstow, who crafted a gritty and intelligent innings on a dry, slow pitch that offered little to either side.

He faced 127 balls for a well-earned fifty, brought up with a four off Veerasammy Permaul as he continued to deploy the cut to great effect any time there was width on offer.

But he upped the tempo after that, scoring his next 50 off just 63 balls, raising his hundred by sweeping Kraigg Brathwaite to the boundary and celebrating with an elated roar and punch of the air.

With the ball swinging in the morning session, Roach had bowled beautifully to claim two wick-



Jonny Bairstow

ets, while Jayden Seales and Holder took one each - the latter without conceding a run from his five overs. Holder finally gave up a run, two in fact, off his 33rd ball to a Bairstow cut.

Having won the toss, England captain Joe Root opted to bat first.

Debutant opener Alex Lees scored off the fifth ball he faced, threading Roach through backward point for four.

He only survived another three balls though, before he was rapped on the front knee roll by a full, straight Roach delivery which narrowly evaded the bat and struck in line with middle and off and, despite a hopeful review, Lees was sent on his way with just those four runs to his name.

Zak Crawley had looked in decent form, driving Seales to the boundary twice in three balls.

But then Joshua Da Silva took a stunner - diving low to his left as Craw-

ley sent an inside edge off Seales that slipped past off stump into the keeper's outstretched glove - and all of a sudden, England were 17 for 2 with barely 20 minutes gone.

In ever-familiar territory with an innings resurrection riding on Root's shoulders - this time at No. 3 in England's revamped line-up - it was almost 23 for 3 when Root, on 9, slashed at a rising Roach delivery which then sailed through the fingers of Jermaine Blackwood at third slip. As the ball raced to the boundary, both sides were left to ponder the potential significance of the moment.

After Foakes' dismissal, Chris Woakes arrived to round out the 'Stokes, Foakes, Woakes' cult theme of the day and he shared an unbroken 54-run partnership with Bairstow, who ended the day 109 not out, to see England close the day one on 268 / 6 with 86 overs bowled.





ICC WOMEN'S CWC 2022

WEST INDIES SCHEDULE

3 MARCH	West Indies v England	BAY OVAL
8 MARCH	West Indies v Australia	UNIVERSITY OVAL
11 MARCH	West Indies v New Zealand	SEDDON PARK
14 MARCH	West Indies v South Africa	BASIN RESERVE
17 MARCH	West Indies v India	BAY OVAL
20 MARCH	West Indies v Sri Lanka	SEDDON PARK
23 MARCH	West Indies v Bangladesh	BASIN RESERVE



CAF GNFC coach takes up professional offer in Suriname

Antigua/Barbuda defender Shakkimba “Yaya” Williams is currently in Suriname where he has taken up a professional football contract.

Williams is representing NV Notch in the Suriname Premier League.

An Ottos native, Williams also plays centre back and defensive midfield positions.

Before departing for Suriname, Williams was engaged by the Calvin Ayre Foundation Generation Next Football Club (CAF GNFC) as a member of its coaching staff.

Williams started with GNFC in 2014 as a coach in the Under-7 division. In 2017, he was reassigned to the Under-13s.

With the start of the CAF GNFC Advanced Academy in 2018, Williams was assigned the additional responsibility of coaching



Antigua & Barbuda defender Shakkimba “Yaya” Williams is currently in Suriname where he has taken up a professional football contract. (Photo courtesy CAF GNFC)

the Under-13s.

President of CAF GNFC, Ambassador Ricky Santos, said the club was proud to see Williams off to Suriname to play profes-

sionally.

“We do have a senior coach who has gone overseas to play professionally, and when I said senior, I meant in years. He is Shak-

kimba “Yaya” Williams. However, he has now taken up a contract in Suriname and we are very proud to see him go off to Suriname,” Ambassador Santos said.

“He is there playing for a team called NV Notch in the premier league for the Suriname Football Association. He should get a lot of experience there.”

Ambassador Santos said while he was happy for Williams and his new career move, he will be missed by the CAF GNFC family.

“I wish him all the best, because I want him to succeed in his football career, but at the same time, I do want him back here at Generations Next Football Club,” Ambassador Santos said.

“He will be there until June and when he gets back, he will be returning to Generation Next in the coaching department.”

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my trainer and Everton ‘Shadow’ Wilkins. Those guys teach me about the fundamentals about horse racing,” he said.

“After that I got some teachings from this guy named Jeff. He is a guy that used to race in the United States, but he had a residence here in which he was living in Paradise View. They used to have horses and he helped me along the way. But there were also a lot of other people that helped me along the way.”

Jacobs said he also had to put in a

lot of time and effort to maintain his weight and fitness.

“Physically every morning at the track, between 5am and 7am I exercise. In the afternoon I do some running. Sometimes to lose weight you use special diets, some running, some cycling and all that to keep the weight under control.

“It was a full workout with a lot of time put into it to achieve that skill-set and fitness level,” he said.

As he bows out of competitive racing, Jacobs has also expressed thanks to his family, friends and fans for their

support. Jacobs said he is now devoting his time to training young jockeys who will continue horse racing in Antigua and Barbuda.

“I had a lot of families, a lot of friend and a lot of fans. I have to give a lot of kudos to my brothers, sisters, father, mother, my wife and my wife’s mom and the fans. They all stuck with me along the way,” Jacobs said.

“I have been mentoring other jockeys along the way and I will keep on doing that. I train young riders, so I will be still participating in that aspect of the sport.”

Jockey Jeff Jacobs announces his retirement

Legendary Antiguan jockey Jeff Jacobs has officially announced his retirement from competitive horse racing.

Jacobs, who was born in 1967, made the announcement Monday on his 55th birthday.

In an interview with *Pointe On De Streetz* on *Pointe FM*, Jacobs said he is fulfilling his decision to retire after 41 years in horse racing.

"I decided in my heart to retire at 40 years. It so happens that the pandemic let it go a year over. But I had decided to give horse racing 40 years and the time has come. The time is up and I want to thank God," Jacobs said.

"There have been a few tears in all that, but at the end of the day, I am still here in one piece. The sport did not retire me, I got the chance to retire from the sport, so I am happy for that."

Jacobs said during his four decade career, he had the opportunity to ride some top horses in Antigua and Barbuda and Nevis. This included *Demolition Man*, which became Antigua and Barbuda's first and only Triple Crown winner in 2014

by winning the three races in the series.

Demolition Man perished in a fire at First Triple Crown Stables in Cassada Gardens on April 16, 2019.

"At the top would be me riding *Demolition Man*, which is the only Triple Crown winner here in Antigua and Barbuda. *Demolition Man* is a horse owned by Hazelroy Barnes and Jerry Roberts. It was trained by Hazelroy Barnes and that was a big achievement for me in my racing," Jacobs said.

"I have travelled a lot. I have been to Jamaica, Barbados, champion jockey in Nevis and Antigua for many years. I have been riding between Antigua and Nevis for a while, and so for over a decade I was champion jockey for both islands.

"I rode *Ponder* down there, that's my Nevis horse that was owned by Dexter Bowen and Dr. Dwayne 'Babba' Thwaites, so that was a good moment for me in Nevis.

"I rode *La Sham*, that was a good horse, won 11 straight on him. The same thing with *Demolition Man*.

"*Social Pride* was a



Legendary Antiguan jockey Jeff Jacobs, second right, competes in a horse racing meet at the Cassada Gardens Race Track in May 2014. (Photo courtesy Jeff Jacobs)

lovely horse that I rode for Andre Piggott and trained by Andre Piggott.

"I had a lot of good moments. More recently I had some fun riding *Syrian Soca*, which is the last champion horse that I rode."

Jacobs, the second son of his mother Sheila "Niccy" Joseph and the first son of his father Alphonso Jacobs, was born in Skerritt's Pasture before he moved with his family to Cassada Gardens where he first got the chance to interact with

horses.

"It all started at Campbell's Buff. I lived in Cassada Gardens and see horses passing up and down there and just loved the animals, and being around them I decided I wanted to become a jockey and it started off right there."

Jacobs credits his friends Neil Pratt and Everton "Shadow" Wilkins with his training to become a jockey.

"Firstly Neil Pratt was

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